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ATHLETICS

Gardner-Webb Announces Contract Extension for Head Coach Alex Simmons

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON MARCH 16, 2022



Simmons Recently Wrapped up her Fourth Season at GWU

By GWU Athletics (<https://gwusports.com/>)

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Gardner-Webb University and head women’s basketball coach Alex Simmons agreed to a contract extension through the 2025-2026 season, the school announced Wednesday.

Simmons recently wrapped up her fourth season in charge at Gardner-Webb and has won 61 games while building her program.

“At Gardner-Webb, we want to win championships,” explained GWU President William Downs. “Alex Simmons knows very well what’s it’s like to win it all as a player. With this contract extension, we are betting on Coach Simmons to make it happen here. Her teams play hard, they leave it all on the court, and they get their fiery energy from their courtside leader. I’m eager to see our end-of-season momentum carry us to new heights in the future.”



The Runnin' Bulldogs (<https://gwusports.com/sports/womens-basketball>) have posted winning records in Big South play each season under Simmons, including a 13-5 mark and fourth-place finish in 2021-2022. That included a run to the semifinals of the 2022 Hercules Tires Big South Conference Championships, where the 'Dogs took top-seed Campbell down the wire before falling 51-50.

"I am excited to continue to build a legacy at Gardner Webb with our women's basketball staff and program," said Simmons. "I have been blessed to be surrounded by a group of people who are committed to the growth of our student-athletes and the success of our program. I want to thank Dr. Downs and Chuck Burch for this opportunity to continue to lead the Runnin' Bulldogs. We have seen tremendous growth and improvement over the last four years and I am eager to see the new heights we will reach in the future."

"Alex has women's basketball at Gardner-Webb headed in the right direction," said Vice President for Athletics Chuck Burch. "Her focus on doing it the right way, and with enthusiasm, has steered the Runnin' Bulldogs toward success. She is a championship-level head coach and we are confident in a terrific future here."

Simmons is tied to a storied history of successful basketball, learning under the legendary Pat Summitt as a player on two national championship teams at Tennessee from 2004-2009. The Lady Vols advanced to three Final Fours during Simmons' career in Knoxville.

The Shelbyville, Tenn., native also played at famed Shelbyville High before heading off to college, earning WBCA and McDonald's All-America honors as a senior. She led the Golden Eagles to three state titles and powered her AAU team to a national crown.

Simmons started her coaching career as a graduate assistant at Kansas, then went on to a terrific stint on the bench at Middle Tennessee State. She helped lead the Blue Raiders to three NCAA Tournament appearances as an assistant coach before moving on to the same role at Ole Miss. She also served as interim head coach at Ole Miss before accepting the Gardner-Webb job on April 24, 2018.

Simmons graduated from Tennessee in 2008 with a degree in exercise science. She and her husband, Christian, have two daughters – Carsyn and Channing.

